

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05  
NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 /060 W  
-----130507 140333Z /12

R 140219Z SEP 78  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7325  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON  
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 30387

DEPARTMENT PASS OAU COLLECTIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PEPR, FR, US, XA  
SUBJ: AFRICAN CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE: SUGGESTED  
AGENDA ITEMS: A FRESH LOOK AT FRENCH POLICIES IN AFRICA

REF: PARIS 20055 JUN 78

1. FOR OVER A YEAR NOW WE HAVE BEEN REPORTING A MAJOR  
CHANGE IN OFFICIAL FRENCH ATTITUDES AND POLICIES  
TOWARDS AFRICA. THIS NEW POLICY DIRECTION IS THE WORK  
OF PRESIDENT GISCARD HIMSELF. IT IS CHARACTERIZED BY:  
A MORE OPEN VIEW OF AFRICA IN WHICH THE DESTINY OF  
FRANCE IS SEEN AS LINKED TO THAT OF ALL AFRICA, NOT  
JUST THE FORMER COLONIES; GREATER INTEREST AND ACTIVITY  
IN AREAS OUTSIDE THE TRADITIONAL SPHERE AND A CONCOMI-  
TANT LESSENING OF THE TENDENCY TO VIEW THE FORMER  
COLONIES AS A FRENCH PRESERVE; AWARENESS THAT THE  
PROBLEMS OF AFRICA ARE INTERRELATED AND BEYOND THE  
POWER OF ANY ONE OUTSIDE POWER TO SOLVE; AND A DESIRE  
FOR CLOSER COOPERATION WITH FRANCE'S WESTERN ALLIES IN  
APPROACHING THOSE PROBLEMS. MANY ASPECTS OF FRANCE'S  
TRADITIONAL AFRICAN POLICIES, OF COURSE, REMAIN, MOST  
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NOTABLY INCLUDING A WILLINGNESS TO UNDERTAKE DIRECT  
INTERVENTION STRICTLY CIRCUMSCRIBED IN SCOPE, DURATION,  
AND OBJECTIVE AND A GENERAL READINESS TO MAKE THE BEST  
OF RELATIONS WITH ANY REGIME WILLING TO HAVE RELATIONS  
WITH FRANCE. OVERLAYING ALL OF THIS IS THE SOMEWHAT  
PHILOSOPHICAL VIEW THAT AFRICA MUST HAVE PEACE AND  
STABILITY IF IT IS TO DEVELOP AND THAT IN THESE CON-

DITIONS THE INTERESTS OF THE WEST WILL PROSPER AS THE COUNTRIES OF AFRICA SEEK WESTERN (AND REJECT SOVIET BLOC) TECHNOLOGY AND PATTERNS FOR DEVELOPMENT. (REFTEL IS A FAIRLY RECENT COMMENTARY ON FRENCH-AFRICAN POLICY).

2. WHILE WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS HERE THERE HAS BEEN A CHANGE AS SKETCHED ABOVE--AND THAT THEREFORE FRENCH POLICY IN AFRICA IS CONSONANT WITH OUR OWN--IT IS APPARENT FROM REPORTING FROM A NUMBER OF POSTS (PARTICULARLY IN ANGLOPHONE AFRICA) THAT EITHER FRENCH POLICY HAS NOT BASICALLY CHANGED IN IMPLEMENTATION, OR THAT IT HAS NOT APPEARED TO HAVE CHANGED IN THE EYES OF A NUMBER OF AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS, OR THAT A NUMBER OF AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS CONSIDER WHATEVER CHANGE THERE HAS BEEN IRRELEVANT TO THEIR NATIONAL INTERESTS. WHATEVER THE CASE, FRENCH POLICIES IN AFRICA HAVE AN IMPACT ON US POLICIES THERE AND ARE ALSO IMPORTANT TO OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. WE SUGGEST, THEREFORE, THAT A DISCUSSION OF FRENCH AFRICAN POLICIES COULD USEFULLY BE ADDED TO THE AGENDA FOR THE AFRICAN CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE.

3. THE QUESTION OF FRANCE AND AFRICA CAN BE ADDRESSED IN A NUMBER OF WAYS. WE SUGGEST THAT THE FOLLOWING KINDS OF QUESTIONS MIGHT BE USEFUL IN OPENING A

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NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED OAU COLLECTIVE.

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7326  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON  
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 30387

DISCUSSION:

(A) HAVE US EMBASSIES IN AFRICA DETECTED CHANGE  
IN FRENCH POLICIES OVER THE PAST ONE OR TWO YEARS  
EITHER IN THE DIRECTION OUTLINED IN PARAGRAPH ONE OR  
IN ANOTHER?

(B) TO WHAT (IF ANY) EXTENT HAVE THESE CHANGES  
BEEN NOTED BY AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS AND, WHERE NOTED,  
HAVE THEY BEEN REGARDED AS POSITIVE OR PERNICIOUS  
(I.E., AS A CYNICAL EFFORT TO EXPAND THE FRENCH SPHERE  
OF INTEREST)?

(C) WHERE THERE IS DEEP SUSPICION AND HOSTILITY  
TOWARDS FRANCE IN AFRICA, HOW MUCH HARM IS DONE IN  
BOTH SHORT- AND LONG-TERM TO US INTERESTS BY VISIBLE  
COOPERATION WITH FRANCE IN OTHER PARTS OF AFRICA?

(D) WHERE FRENCH STANDING IS HIGH, DO WE RISK  
DAMAGING OUR POSITION BY A TOO EVIDENT DISTANCING OF  
OURSELVES FROM FRANCE? IS THIS IMPORTANT TO US  
INTERESTS?

(E) HAS THE HOSTILITY EVIDENT BETWEEN LARGE  
PARTS OF FRANCOPHONE AND ANGLOPHONE AFRICA TAKEN  
ON AN EXISTENCE OF ITS OWN LARGELY INDEPENDENT OF THE  
POSITIONS OR ACTIONS OF THE FORMER COLONIAL POWERS?  
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4. THE ABOVE QUESTIONS SEEM RELEVANT FROM PARIS.  
OTHER AND POSSIBLY MORE USEFUL QUESTIONS MIGHT BE  
POSED FROM THE AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE.  
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## Message Attributes

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